

# MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CROSS PARTY GROUP ON TOWNS AND TOWN CENTRES

Wednesday, 5 December 2018, 13:00 – 14:30

Committee Room 2, Scottish Parliament

## 1. Welcome and Opening Remarks

Convener, John Scott MSP welcomed all to the meeting.

Attendees and Apologies are noted in Appendix 2.

## 2. Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of the Cross Party Group held 26<sup>th</sup> September

The Minutes of the Meeting were accepted as a true and accurate record and J Scott MSP proposed adoption. There were no matters arising.

## 3. Clean, Green, Sustainable Towns

Phil Prentice, Chief Officer, Scotland's Towns Partnership and National Director, Scotland's Improvement Districts, introduced the topic. Making reference to the recent, Place Summit, he stressed the need for an holistic approach to place - investing in the environment is key.

The following points are highlights only. Full presentations, where provided, are available in the CPG area of the Scotland's Towns Partnership website, along with a 'Wakelet', a multi-media report of the discussions.

### Urban Green Infrastructure: Making Healthy, Prosperous Places

*Presented by, Iain Rennick, Head of Structural Funds, Scottish Natural Heritage*

Investing in natural environment and green space is one of best investments a place can make.

Every pound invested sees a return of twenty pounds to the economy. The SNH Green Infrastructure fund, is a programme of £40m between now and 2023. Their programme of work focuses on developing Green Space and helps to support the following areas:

#### People

- Happier, healthier people in communities.
- Connecting people, avoiding social isolation.
- Value and understand the environment.

#### Economic Return

- Brings business, jobs and investment: business want to locate in nice places.
- Property value increases: Investment then higher, better building stock.
- Volunteering. Develops people's skills for the labour market.

#### Savings

- Green space is free to use once provided – addressing many physical and mental health issues.
- Reduces crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Cheaper than hard engineering.
- Helps against impact of climate change.

Recognition in government policy is key. As a country we have a lot of green space but often of poor quality, poorly design, single purpose, often an add on or the first thing squeezed out of a project to cut costs. This needs to change.

### Zero Waste Scotland and Towns

*Presented by, Lesley Ure, Project Development Officer and Warren McIntyre, Programme Manager, Zero Waste Scotland (ZWS)*

Warren McIntyre discussed projects with Scotland's Improvement Districts that reduce costs and consolidation of waste service provision.

ZWS provided the following support: (1) Carry out waste audits to develop baseline waste data, (2) Waste Management Services 'Preferred Supplier' Procurement, and (3) Waste Prevention Plan / technical options.

Important learning from the pilots with the Improvement Districts showed it was effective but learning can be taken forward from this.

ZWS would like to carry out more work like this and encourages people to contact them. They outlined tools and resources available on their website.

### Prosperous and Productive Places: The Future of Scotland's Vacant and Derelict Land

*Presented by, Martin Valenti, Strategic Director, Scottish Land Commission*

Martin discussed the Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey, which identified almost 12,000 hectares of land. There is now a collaborative framework to transform vacant and derelict land. The 1980s framework worked then to avoid harm. However, now the aim is a 2018 opportunity focused to unlock the land, to make unproductive land, productive land.

The project involves the unusual suspects not traditionally or formerly associated. For example, Scottish Enterprise Chief Executive, Steve Dunlop and Social Bite Housing First initiative.

The first steps will be to:

- Focus initially on a representative sample of 100 sites, to stimulate action on them and in turn learn what systemic change is needed to unlock other sites.
- Then, connecting these sites into mainstream regional economic partnerships, CSGN and other delivery mechanisms is going to be a key goal.

### Keep Scotland Beautiful: Communities and Environmental Quality

*Presented by, Pete Leonard, Operations Director, Keep Scotland Beautiful (KSB)*

Keep Scotland Beautiful is the charity that campaigns, acts and educates on a range of local, national and global environmental issues to change behaviour and improve the quality of people's lives and the places they care for.

Committed to making Scotland clean, green and sustainable, their activities cover three broad themes:

- i. Sustainable Development Education – providing education initiatives for children young people and educators which focus on environmental issues to improve understanding and encourage positive action, primarily via the Eco-Schools programme.
- ii. Local Environmental Quality – providing advice and support to help and create and maintain cleaner, safer and healthier local environments where people and communities can thrive.
- iii. Sustainability and Climate Change – working with organisations and communities to help people to reduce carbon emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

Keep Scotland Beautiful provides a range of environmental services which includes:

- Independent audit and validation surveys of street cleanliness.
- Community and business engagement using the Place Standard Tool.
- ISM and Nudge behaviour change interventions.
- Campaign design, execution and impact measurement.

Keep Scotland Beautiful occupies a unique space that bridges communities, public bodies and the private sector, providing a trusted and safe environment in which collaboration and partnerships flourish. They work with all 32 Local authorities, NHS Health, the social housing sector, Improvement Districts and Town Centre Management organisations, other third sector organisations and with a wide range of private sector companies and organisations.

A case study of their work with Improvement District, Falkirk Delivers, highlighted that their local environmental audits provide a reliable and consistent method of evaluating street cleaning and environmental quality, enabling the Improvement District and its partners to maintain environmental standards and to monitor the effectiveness of improvement projects.

Keep Scotland Beautiful's 'It's Your Neighbourhood' and 'Clean-Up Scotland' campaigns, generated 335,500 hours of voluntary action in 2017/18, with a calculated economic benefit of over £4m.

#### **4. Discussion**

A number of members discussed concern of decisions being imposed on communities. Today's speakers, however, stressed that it was the intention in all projects featured to empower community leadership. For example, SNH funding is dependent on community involvement. All contributors emphasised the importance of working with those in the community who know the area and contacts. KSB referenced their work in Torry, to provide children with space. It was agreed that visible, proactive ways must be found to help communities navigate complexities. This is about behaviour change by inspiration. Warren McIntyre referenced the Scottish Sustainability Business Partnership, so perhaps similar could be replicated for communities in terms of a portal. All collaborators must get to know the landscape and support available.

Michelle Ballantyne MSP asked if Martin Valenti has engaged with the Planning Bill. MV noted that RTPi's director sits on taskforce.

J Scott thanked speakers and noted the abiding theme is to work collaboratively.

#### **5. Any Other Competent Business**

Rhona Gibson highlighted that the Paths For All – Smarter Choices Smarter Places fund is open to all except councils. Walk at Work Award just launched. Details will be shared via Scotland's Towns Partnership.

J Scott announced that the annual parliamentary reception to celebrate small and rural towns, is to be held in the Garden Lobby on 26<sup>th</sup> March.

## Presentation of Scotland's Most Beautiful High Street 2018 Award

*Presented by, John Scott MSP, Phil Prentice and Pete Leonard*

The formal presentation was made to the winner of Scotland's Most Beautiful High Street 2018. Aberdeenshire town, Turriff, was voted by the public as Scotland's Most Beautiful High Street 2018, recognising the heritage, beauty and unique experience the town centre offers.

Members of the public were invited to choose from among a shortlist of entries, which also included Cupar, Denny, Inverurie, Jedburgh, and Linlithgow. Voting was very close, with Linlithgow and Inverurie being awarded 2nd and 3rd places respectively. Details on the full results are available on the Scotland's Towns Partnership website.

Organised by Keep Scotland Beautiful and Scotland's Towns Partnership, the Scotland's Most Beautiful High Street competition seeks to celebrate civic pride in our towns and the groups who come together and work to change their communities for the better: making local places clean, attractive, accessible, sustainable, vibrant and inclusive for all to enjoy.

### **6. Date of Next Meeting**

13<sup>th</sup> March (13:00 – 14:30). Theme to be announced.

**APPENDIX 1 – RECORD OF 5 DECEMBER 2018 AGENDA**

**Cross Party Group on Towns and Town Centres**

12:30 – 14:00, Wednesday, 5<sup>th</sup> December 2018

Committee Room 2 , Scottish Parliament

**AGENDA**

**‘Clean, Green, Sustainable Towns’**

*Refreshments kindly supported by Zero Waste Scotland and Keep Scotland Beautiful*

- 12:00 Meet in Parliament reception area  
12:30 Light refreshments  
12:40 Welcome and Opening Remarks – John Scott MSP, Convener  
12:45 Minutes of the Meeting of the Cross Party Group held 26<sup>th</sup> September  
Matters Arising from the Minutes

**Clean, Green, Sustainable Towns**

- 12:50 **Introduction**  
Phil Prentice, Chief Officer, Scotland’s Towns Partnership
- 12:55 **Urban Green Infrastructure: Making Healthy, Prosperous Places**  
Iain Rennick, Head of Structural Funds, Scottish Natural Heritage
- 13:05 **Zero Waste Scotland and Towns**  
Lesley Ure, Project Development Officer and Warren McIntyre, Programme Manager, Zero Waste Scotland
- 13:15 **Prosperous and Productive Places: The Future of Scotland’s Vacant and Derelict Land**  
Martin Valenti, Strategic Director, Scottish Land Commission
- 13:25 **Discussion**
- 13:35 **Keep Scotland Beautiful: Communities and Environmental Quality**  
Pete Leonard, Operations Director, Keep Scotland Beautiful
- 13:45 **Presentation of Scotland’s Most Beautiful High Street**  
Presented by Pete Leonard, Operations Director, Keep Scotland Beautiful
- 13:50 Any Other Competent Business
- 14:00 Close of Meeting

Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> March, 1pm – 2.30pm

## APPENDIX 2 – ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES FOR THE CPG ON 5 DECEMBER 2018

### Attendees

Andrew	Anderson	Scottish Borders Council
Simon	Baldwin	Destination 66
Cllr Donald	Balsillie	Clackmannanshire Council
Neil	Bibby	MSP
Rachel	Blair	Charity Retail Association
Elaine	Bone	Scotland's Towns Partnership
Chic	Brodie	
Leigh	Brown	Perth and Kinross Council / ATCM
Stephen	Campopiano	WSP
Marj	Chalmers	Turriff Business Association
Cllr Ian	Cochrane	South Ayrshire Council
John	Cowan	Real Retail Solutions
Graham	Esson	Perth and Kinross Council
Jennifer	Fingland	Cycling Scotland
Margaret	Fraser	NG Homes
Jane	Freer	
David	Fryer	
Rona	Gibb	Paths for All
David	Grove	Fife Council
Derek	Harper	
Stewart	Hurry	SBRC
Alison	Jones	Scotland's Towns Partnership
Thomas	Kane	4-Consulting
Brian	Kelly	
Reeni	Kennedy-Boyle	Fyne Futures
Gary	Kerr	Paisley Community Trust
Pete	Leonard	Keep Scotland Beautiful
David	Lindgren	Essential Edinburgh
Rose	Logan	Turriff Business Association
Murdo	Macdonald	Church of Scotland
Ailsa	Macfarlane	Built Environment Forum Scotland
David	Main	
Stephen	Martin	Eyebright Utilities
Margaret	McCole	The Ridge
Paul	McComish	
Greg	McCracken	Museum & Galleries Scotland
Warren	McIntyre	Zero Waste Scotland
Avril	McKenzie	Living Streets
Audrey	Michie	Aberdeenshire Council
Patricia M W	Mitchell	Cupar in Bloom
Stewart	Ness	West Lothian Council
Stuart	Nichol	
Susan	O'Connor	Scottish Civic Trust
Andrew	Ormston	
Cristina	Orsatti	University of Glasgow

Phil	Prentice	Scotland's Towns Partnership
Derek	Rankine	SURF
Memory	Ren	
Iain	Rennick	Scottish Natural Heritage
Ewan	Robertson	Scotland's Towns Partnership
Vivienne	Robinson	City of Edinburgh Council
Mark	Rowley	Scottish Borders Council
John	Scott	MSP
Len	Seal	
Tom	Sneddon	DTAS
Cllr Jane	Strang	Renfrewshire Council
James	Trolland	
Lesley	Ure	Zero Waste Scotland
Martin	Valenti	Scottish Land Commission
Peter	De Vink	Edinburgh Financial and General Holdings Ltd
John	Weir	

### Apologies

Maggie	Broadley	Maggie Broadley Co Create
Pete	Cheema	Scottish Grocer's Federation
Mark	Harris	North Lanarkshire Council
Ian	Fowell	Small Towns Group
Malcolm	Fraser	
Cllr Ashley	Graczyk	City of Edinburgh Council
Susan	Jones	Renfrewshire Council
David	Lonsdale	Scottish Retail Consortium
Gillian	Martin	MSP
Paul	McComish	
Penny	Morriss	Living Streets
Derek	Robertson	Keep Scotland Beautiful
Prof Leigh	Sparks	University of Stirling
Rachel	Tennant	Landscape Institute Scotland
Catherine	Topley	Scottish Canals
Lynsae	Tulloch	SBRC